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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 000694

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/20/2017

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SUBJECT: STATE COMPTROLLER'S REPORT ON DEFENSE OF THE HOME
FRONT MAY BLAME OLMERT, PERETZ FOR NEGLIGENCE

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Gene A. Cretz, Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

¶1. (C) Well-connected former Mossad officer and current think tank director Uzi Arad told PolCouns and visiting S/P deputy director Matt Waxman March 1 that the State Comptroller's report on the GOI's protection of the Home Front during last summer's war with Hizballah is scheduled for release March 6. Arad said he had read an advance copy of the report; the State Comptroller concludes that Prime Minister Olmert and Defense Minister Peretz were guilty of gross negligence in their failure to protect the civilian population of northern Israel during the war. Arad claimed that the report's language is strong enough to cause serious political damage to both Olmert and Peretz in advance of the release of the widely-anticipated interim report of the Winograd Committee on the Lebanon War, which many Israeli contacts say could be released around March 15.

¶2. (C) Comment: Arad used to be in Olmert's circle of friends, but like prominent journalist Dan Margalit, Arad has turned into a harsh critic of Olmert's performance as prime minister. Arad may have exaggerated the seriousness of the State Comptroller's report, but he is well-connected and a serious behind-the-scenes player.

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